

# Christianity and Crisis

A Bi-Weekly Journal of Christian Opinion

VOL. XV, No. 12

JULY 11, 1955

\$2.50 per year; 15 cents per copy

## That Communion May Be Open

IN A RECENT ISSUE of *Christianity and Crisis* its "Priestly Poet," looking forward to the next Assembly of the World Council of Churches, expressed the fervent aspiration of a multitude of people:

"We hope 'n'

Pray

Communion may

Be op'n."

And not only the desire, but also the humiliation we all share that something which seems so essentially right has not long since been realized in practice.

If we must wait, as some seem to contend, until we all think alike about the service of Holy Communion we will never meet together at the Table of the Lord. If the members of the House of Bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church were required to think alike about this service and interpret it alike, there would be no common celebration of the Holy Communion at their meetings. Indeed, what individual parish church would have such a service in common if all the members were to think alike before receiving the bread and wine. If we all must think alike then the "rich diversity of life and devotion in which the unity of the whole fellowship will be fulfilled," which is so moving a part of the vision of the Church set forth by the Lambeth Conference of 1920, is also discarded. And when we consider some of the things which set up this barrier, the sense of shame is deepened. A brief prayer comes to mind: "Give us, O God, a right discernment between that which comes first in our faith and that which follows after; and when we are tempted to make much of that which really cannot matter much to Thee, recall us to the heart of our Christian profession, which is Jesus Christ, our Lord." This gives us pause: *things which really cannot matter much to Thee.*

Yet such a united service, especially in these great ecumenical gatherings, would surely be a means of furthering the purpose of unity. It is hardly necessary to argue that it is of the nature of spiritual experience to bring us closer to our fellows. "Lo, I am the . . . breaker of barriers, saith the Lord." For in spiritual experience we touch the Holy Spirit of God, who is the ground of all existence, in whom all men live and move

and have their being, whose all-sustaining beauty runs through all and doth all unite. It would be strange indeed if this communion of the soul with God did not issue in a closer bond with our brethren, a more compelling sense of human fellowship, the moving conviction of our unity in him. One recalls the figure used by a Russian abbot: imagine religion to be a circle with God as the center and the radii the souls of men; it will be obvious that, as we approach the center, there will be increasing proximity among the radii. The nearer we come to God the closer we move to one another.

If this is true of spiritual experience in general, how much more implicit is it in the very nature of the highest act of worship in the church's life? One would think there is no fellowship quite so profound, so universal in its implications, so concrete in its demands as that which should result from such experience. And particularly so when sincere men, troubled in conscience by the divisions in the body of Christ, meet together for the purpose of exploring the way to reunion; all members of the universal Church of Christ, though serving in different fractions thereof, and possessing in common one Lord, one God and Father of all; men who not only do *not* "express acquiescence in the continuation of separately organized churches" but are dedicated to the purpose of knitting together the severed body; who would crown their discussion of unity by a deed of unity, and in a united service of Holy Communion ask that the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be given their endeavor. One would expect that the great object would here be brought nearer. For in such a presence prejudice would be softened and seen in its true light; here emphasis put where it belongs; here fellowship would be most profound. And in such an atmosphere might not apparently insoluble problems tend to break down and become capable of solution? Here also, if one may put it this way, God would be given a chance to operate from a new fulcrum. Such an event might "introduce God into the world in a new concretion. Through it his ideal vision is given a base in actual fact, to which he provides the ideal consequence as a factor saving the world from the self-destruction of evil" (Whitehead). Here is a *means* of furthering

the unity we seek, and it is a vast pity that these great ecumenical gatherings have to miss it.

"When we make much of that which really cannot matter much to Thee, recall us to the heart of our Christian profession."

W. S.

#### EDITORIAL NOTES

The change of atmosphere in international affairs has been quite remarkable within the past few months. It is of such a nature that it is wise to be suspicious but it would be folly to allow suspicion to blind us to new opportunities that may be real. It is not enough to repeat the formula that the Communists never change their objectives, only their tactics. As a formula that is probably correct, at least so far as conscious objectives are concerned. On the other hand, it is possible that a long enough period of changed tactics may change the Communists even if their conscious objectives remain the same. This is our hope, and it may be a substantial hope if the changed tactics are based upon a new objective situation which is faced with some degree of realism. If the Russian leaders are really becoming aware of the fact that general war can mean only destruction for the whole technical civilization which is so central in their vision of life, this involves a radical change in their view of history. The Marxist dialectic does not have a place for war as itself an independent source of overwhelming evil. War, for it, creates occasions of which Communists can take advantage for the sake of revolution. That was true of World War I and it was true of the Second. To realize that it would probably not be true of a third because a third war would probably destroy the very substance of civilized life means a tremendous change in outlook. A third war might lead to revolutions but even the Communists may realize that such revolutions in so disordered a world might be of little use even to them.

There are other changes in the situation which may also be favorable to real relaxation of the tension—internal stresses which in this case seem to produce caution and the recognition of Yugoslavia's more open brand of communism. Perhaps we may see a ground for hope in the decline of the original fanaticism in Russia. This has often been noted in comparing the Russians with the Chinese. It may prove to be a more significant phenomenon than we have yet realized. Such decline may not change the conscious objectives of the Communists and yet it may change them as people so much that these objectives cease to dominate their minds.

These considerations should not cause us to reduce our strength unilaterally or discard our suspicions, but they should open our minds to new and perhaps quite unexpected possibilities.

The contracts between the United Auto Workers and Ford and General Motors dramatize as few events have done the new condition of the industrial workers in our society. Many things are said about the dangers which accompany their new power but they are only relevant as criticisms of an uncritical idealism which often accompanied support for labor. This is a far more healthy society in having a great segment of the population gain the power to defend itself which it did not have twenty years ago. But these contracts show even more clearly that, as a people, we are coming to regard it as intolerable for the industrial workers to be the first to bear the brunt of economic instability in their own lives. Unemployment insurance pointed in this direction but it still meant great hardship and insecurity. These contracts mean a much more substantial sharing of the human risks in our economy on the part of the whole community. They make clearer than anything that has happened that industry does not regard labor as a commodity to be used or discarded as is profitable. As Joseph C. Harsch said in a broadcast, we have remarkable evidence of the error of Marxist predictions. We are developing an alternative type of economy which the Marxists never believed possible.

There are objections to the formula of a "guaranteed annual wage," for this promises more than is possible. These contracts involve only a limited guarantee and they are far sounder than the slogan under which they were negotiated. The next problem will be the relation of the workers in favored industries who can benefit by such contracts and workers in many other industries.

J. C. B.

#### CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editors:

During the past few weeks *Christianity and Crisis* has been on the bottom of the heap. Bible School, calls, conferences were on a top priority.

But what refreshment it was to read your issue of June 13, 1955: new ideas, excellent analysis and especially "St. Hereticus."

Thanks to you and your staff for a lift and a boost, and a grin.

Sincerely,  
Roland T. Kamm  
First Presbyterian Church  
Morrison, Illinois

#### Authors in this Issue

*Dr. Bela Vassady, currently Professor of Systematic Theology at the Theological Seminary of the Evangelical and Reformed Church in Lancaster, Pa., is a native Hungarian, long active in ecumenical affairs both in Hungary and the United States*

*Eugene L. Stockwell is pastor of the Methodist Evangelical Church in Salto, Uruguay.*

# Latin America Today

EUGENE L. STOCKWELL

FOR A FEW DAYS each year Latin America captures United States newspaper headlines. Last year the invasions of Guatemala and Costa Rica awakened us to the turmoil south of our border. To many Latin America appears to be a distant volcano, unnoticed most of the time, which occasionally erupts to our annoyance and confusion. Yet the volcano will not be silenced. Revolution follows revolution, Southern governments request economic aid, social unrest prevails. United States leaders and politicians travel southward to inquire earnestly about political and economic needs, to patch up tottering policies, to silence opposition, to understand this land in ferment. In recent months Latin America has received many such visitors, headed by Vice President Nixon in the Caribbean, Secretary Dulles at the Caracas Conference, and Dr. Milton Eisenhower around the continent.

What is happening today in Latin America? What is the overall situation south of the Rio Grande? Any attempt to answer such a query suffers inevitably from wide generalizations. To lump together Uruguay's stable democracy, Bolivia's social revolution and Venezuela's bloody dictatorship, is close to preposterous. Yet there are general trends visible which enable us to grasp Latin America's essential problems and provide a framework within which Latin American developments should be interpreted.

The twenty Latin American nations have a population roughly equivalent to that of the United States, and live in a geographical area almost three times the size of the United States. For a century and a half, since independence was won from European tutelage, the dominant notes in Latin America have been political instability, economic chaos and social unrest. The roots of much of this reach back to colonial history. The protests against oppressive Spanish and Portuguese colonial policies catapulted Latin American nations into a freedom which they desperately needed but for which they were sorely unprepared. They had little tradition of democratic representation. There were few if any norms of humanitarianism, despite the strong influence of the Roman Church in the colonies. A medieval feudalism prevailed in the economic and social spheres. It was inevitable that the growing pains of incipient nations should be severe. They are still felt throughout most of Latin America as it struggles to attain maturity and respect amid the speed of an industrial age.

The amazing fact is not that there is political and economic instability in Latin America; it is that in a relatively short period of time many of these nations, sensing their opportunities and responsibilities, have evolved rapidly towards some measure of democracy. What has happened in Uruguay in the past fifty years

indicates what can happen. From fratricidal civil conflicts it has moved to a stable democratic organization, enlightened social legislation and a liberty which is most remarkable. But in most of Latin America it is precisely at this point of political and economic evolution and revolution that serious storm warnings have been appearing in recent years.

Latin America's destiny depends largely on its relations with the United States. President Franklin Roosevelt's Good Neighbor Policy spelled great hope for Latin American democrats. The abrogation of the Platt Amendment, the 1933 proclamation of the principle of "nonintervention," the President's 1936 trip to Buenos Aires, the reciprocal trade agreements, the interchange of professors and the general interest taken in good hemispheric relations meant much to Latin America, and created a vast reservoir of goodwill towards the United States. The tragedy is that the gains of the thirties are being dissipated in the fifties. In 1947 there were only five dictatorships in Latin America, and two of them were tottering. But today over half the Latin American nations are suffering the ruthless despotism of totalitarian regimes, and there is no assurance that the pendulum has as yet swung all the way to the right.

Latin American democrats are tempted to cast much of the blame for these late developments on the United States. Their arguments cannot be shrugged off easily. They point repeatedly to three failings in recent United States policies which have adversely affected our Southern neighbors. These criticisms point up the condition of Latin America today.

## I.

In the first place, many feel there has been a distortion of the doctrine of nonintervention. Hailed as the bulwark of freedom at the 1933 Montevideo Conference, it has been transmuted into a refuge for despicable dictators. The doctrine was much needed after the "big stick" policies of Theodore Roosevelt, who relied on the Marines to compel obedience to U.S. decisions. No Latin American regrets the passing of the "big stick" era. But the protection of weak sovereignties, implicit in the doctrine of nonintervention, has of late been turned into a protection of the despot from international scrutiny as he violates the most elemental human rights. Over-rapid recognition of insurgent military regimes has bolstered up dictatorships imposed in open violation of national constitutions. Economic and military aid has been distributed indiscriminately to dictators as well as freedom-loving governments, often supporting the repression of liberties or fortifying military cliques which subsequently have rebelled against legally constituted



governments. The United States turned a deaf ear to the clamor of Latin American democrats who could not bear to witness the 1954 hemispheric conference at Caracas held on the doorstep of Venezuela's Pérez Jiménez, a vicious tyrant by any standard. This seemed to many a peculiar interpretation of the doctrine of nonintervention. Democratic Costa Rica refused to attend the Conference for this very reason, though its President José Figueres is a fast friend of the United States. The Organization of American States, in which the dictators hold the voting power, struck off the agenda of the Caracas Conference all consideration of protection of human rights, among other items dear to Latin American democrats, in order as one put it, "not to mention the noose in the home of the hanged." The United States consented. The responsibilities of democratic world leadership that the United States has assumed should not be negated by a too rigid doctrine of nonintervention. At least in the realms of diplomatic courtesies, moral influence and economic aid, democracies can be favored as against dictatorships without violating non-intervention.

What are the limits of nonintervention? At what point does nonintervention become covert intervention against the weak in favor of the strong? These are not questions that admit easy answers. One might hope, however, that the United States be more politically realistic in its dealings with Latin America, and if it must recognize the existence of corrupt governments and maintain formal relations with them, at least it might refrain from giving political, economic and military aid to those who mock the very freedoms we choose to defend in our worldwide struggle against communism. Certainly there is cause for gratitude in the United States' prompt support of Costa Rican democracy against the recent invasion encouraged by Somoza's Nicaragua dictatorship. The same may be said of President Eisenhower's refreshing decision to aid the revolutionary government of Bolivia. Yet, there is much that could be done to avoid entangling alliances with Trujillo, Peron, Odria, Pérez Jiménez and others of similar caliber.

## II.

The Communists are active in Latin America. Just how successful they have been so far is most difficult to determine. But it is certain that we make a great mistake if we interpret Latin America merely in terms of the global tension between communism and democratic freedom. The facts simply do not fit that pattern. The understandable concern of the United States to fight communism at every turn has carried over to its dealings with Latin America. However watchful Latin American countries must be for Communist infiltration, the supreme issue at the moment in Latin America is not between communism and democratic freedom, but between non-communist totalitarianism and democratic freedom. Seemingly the

United States has been beguiled into supporting those who are most outspoken against communism—the dictators—and thereby has aided and abetted the very regimes that foster the conditions which ultimately could be most propitious for communism.

The Guatemala episode is enlightening. Prior to 1944 Jorge Ubico was Guatemala's iron-hand dictator. The average per capita income in Guatemala was about \$77 per year, as compared with \$1680 in the United States. About 2 per cent of the people owned 70 per cent of the land. About 50 per cent of the population owned no shoes. The country had one of the highest infant mortality rates in the world. Illiteracy reached at least 70 per cent. Ubico, the dictator, served United States interests almost slavishly, going to the extent of cruelly persecuting the population of German origin in a bid to please his northern neighbor engaged in a war against Nazism. The general condition of the country was ripe for some kind of revolution, and though today it should be obvious that such conditions are a fertile field for communism, in the early forties few suspected it. The 1944 revolution deposed Ubico and brought in President Arévalo, a sincere democratic liberal, who put through many social reforms designed to benefit Guatemala's peasantry. Arévalo was later succeeded by Arbenz, a more willing tool of the Communists. As Donald Grant of the St. Louis Post Dispatch has pointed out (in the *Journal of International Affairs*, 1955 issue, devoted to "Problems and Progress in Latin America," which journal should be required reading for anyone desiring to understand present-day Latin America) this was the moment at which the United States could have undergirded Guatemala's feeble democracy. The United States was not interested. International communism was. There is no doubt that in subsequent years the Communists gained a measure of influence and control in Guatemala. The United States then felt obliged to counter Communist gains with measures which were most distasteful to the rest of Latin America, except to most of the dictators. Secretary Dulles turned powerful pressure on the Caracas delegates in March, 1954, to push through an anti-communist resolution. In June, 1954, the Castillo Armas forces invaded Guatemala from foreign bases (principally Honduras) with at least political and diplomatic aid from the United States, if not more. The rapid downfall of the Arbenz regime is known to all. Castillo Armas is now a de facto dictator in his own right, and a good many of the social and political gains Guatemala made from 1944 to 1954, particularly during the early years under Arévalo, appear to be in danger, if they have not already been lost.

There are many lessons to be learned from Guatemala. One is that the United States aid, given at the right moment—1944—would probably have avoided the unfortunate turn of events in 1954. Another is that the support of dictatorships such as Ubico's, which

themselves pose threats to democracy comparable to the threats of communism, may only result in easing the task of international communism. If the United States uses the Communist yardstick to guide its foreign policy in Latin America, it runs the real danger of supporting the wrong side, unless it extends the yardstick to include the conditions which give rise to communism in the first place.

An encouraging step in the right direction is occurring in Bolivia. Prior to 1952 the Bolivian Indian lived under unspeakably sordid conditions. For decades the country had been at the mercy of the Patino tin empire, which could hardly have perpetrated greater devastation on Bolivia had it ravaged the country systematically. Pre-1952 Bolivia is comparable to pre-1944 Guatemala. In 1952, under the inspired leadership of Victor Paz Estenssoro, a new era began. During the past three years Pas Estenssoro has nationalized the mines, extended the right to vote, carried through an agrarian reform and generally attempted to improve the lot of the underprivileged. Yet these have been exceedingly difficult years for Bolivia. The shackles of decades cannot be shaken off easily. Bolivia has baffling economic problems to deal with. The United States must help to avoid another "Guatemala" ten years from now. President Eisenhower has heartened democratic Latin America by tendering support to the Paz Estenssoro government. It is to be hoped that Congress will not deny Bolivia its greatest opportunity in the name of economy on foreign aid. A relatively small amount of aid in these crucial years to Bolivia, as well as to other democratic governments, can mean much to Latin America and to the United States as well.

### III.

A third area of very great concern to Latin America is its economic life. Problems in this area are extremely complex. A good many of our Southern neighbors accumulated considerable dollar and sterling reserves during World War II, and for a time were able to rely on these, but now those reserves are expended. From 1945 to 1953 the per capita income in Latin America rose 3.3 per cent each year, a remarkable increase. But during the last few years this upward curve has tended to fall off. Latin America must look to the United States for aid in order to build up its savings which in turn will establish a firmer basis for local investment and reinvestment. It is to the interest of the United States to provide such aid, for Latin America offers a huge market for U.S. products, just as the United States is the major market for Latin American exports. It is estimated that an annual average of 627 million dollars have been invested in Latin America from foreign sources (principally from the United States) in recent years. But to continue Latin America's economic expansion at the rate of the past decade there is an annual need of 1,000

million dollars during the coming few years. From whatever source it may come, that amount is needed to assist Latin America to greater economic self-sufficiency. It should be noted that what is requested is not a grant or a gift. Latin America wishes loans on reasonable terms, and expects to repay them as it is already doing. (The figures in this paragraph are taken from Serge Fliegers, "The Financing of Latin American Economic Development" in the *Journal of International Affairs* mentioned previously, page 56.)

Where will the help come from? This is the crucial issue which caused some hard feeling at the Inter-American Economic Conference at Rio de Janeiro last year. It involves one of the attitudes dearest to the Eisenhower administration which can cause trouble in our relations with Latin America. There are four principal sources: (1) private investors, who exact more for servicing the loans and who generally do not allow long repayment periods, (2) the Export-Import Bank, financed by the United States, (3) the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, financed primarily by the United States, and (4) some type of hemispheric bank or fund designed to meet the needs of Latin American nations on easier terms than those required elsewhere. This last was the proposal many countries carried to Rio, only to meet the opposition of the United States. Why? Surely there are many reasons, but one which causes deep concern is that the present administration relies heavily on the wide expansion of private investments. The support given by our government to the New Orleans investment conference recently is an indication of this. Repeated pronouncements such as those of Dr. Milton Eisenhower, and Mr. Henry Holland of the Department of State, are disquieting in that they indicate that our government would leave the main investment task in private hands. In a word, the job is given to those who make it most difficult for Latin America to accept the financing.

Beneath this insistence on private investment lies a deeper attitude which, Latin Americans suspect, influences our leaders' thinking. Latin America is thought of primarily as a profitable investment market. Financing left to private investors, despite current talk of partnership, would seem to place Latin Americans at something of a disadvantage, for the major benefits would accrue to the stronger partners, the investors. But what is profitable for U.S. business is not necessarily the best international policy. If investments siphon off too much profit the inevitable result will be retaliatory restrictions which close down the country to future investments. Such a policy will also foster hatred towards the United States. No nation enjoys being thought of as a lush field for foreign profit, least of all Latin American nations which have suffered the results of disastrous economic imperialism during the past century. Latin America should not be considered a bridge to better profits for the United States investors. It should be seen as a series of respected and

important communities which are essential partners in world democracy. In the measure that our economic aid helps to undergird democratic governments, to raise living standards and to contribute towards a greater degree of self-sufficiency, we are performing a task which will be profitable in the best sense, both for us, for Latin America, and for the world at large.

Latin America ceased to be a series of colonies over a century ago. In recent times it has been throwing off the shackles of economic imperialism. These

nations have struggled towards a new consciousness of national self-respect. The concomitant confusion, with varying degrees of militarism and corruption, has enabled dictators to turn events to their own advantage. Yet Latin Americans have never ceased to fight for their freedom from tyrants without and within. The United States has a golden opportunity to align itself with the democratic aspirations of Latin America that will rebound to our mutual well-being for years to come.

## Beachhead or Bridge?

THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH IN A DIVIDED WORLD

BELA VASSADY

THE EVANSTON ASSEMBLY was undoubtedly an ecumenical gathering. It was attended by delegates who came from all sides of "the whole inhabited earth"; yet they regarded themselves as ambassadors for the very same Christ and as members of the very same Church. But for the very reason, now, after the Evanston Assembly, even much more than before it, it is our bounden duty to give whole-soul and whole-life answers to questions like these: What is the mission of the Church of Christ in our divided world? How can she best promote the cause of a peaceful as well as of a responsible coexistence? Should she serve as a spiritual beachhead, or rather as a bridge? And if it is her commission to be a spiritual beachhead, is she obliged to render such a service to one side of our divided world over against the other side of the same world? Or, again, if she is committed to serve rather as a bridge, does that mean that she should become a non-critical, quasi-sentimental liaison or link whose sheer role would simply be to affect an unprincipled appeasement of both sides of our world? These and similar questions are certainly rooted and grounded in the be-all and end-all of our contemporary ecumenical existence.

The Church of Christ — thank God! — can be found on both sides of the Iron (Bamboo) Curtain. This undeniable fact pertains to her ecumenical heritage and at the same time irresistibly shapes her ecumenical destiny. This "fact," however, must be made a moulding "factor" throughout the whole divided world, so that it can become another "token of hope" (to use an expression of the Evanston Assembly), witnessing to Christ's coming in our time as well as to his coming in glory and triumph at the end of the age. What then, are the most important theological presuppositions of the church's witness to our divided world?

### Three Times "The Third . . ."

The nature of the church in her relation to the world can best be described by two paradoxical statements: 1. The church is *in* the world, but not *of* the

world; 2. She is both *against* the world, and *for* the world. The second paradox necessarily and dynamically follows from the first.

The church is *in* the world but not *of* the world. Drawing on some deep insights of early Christian thought as well as of contemporary theological thinking, this first paradox could be further explained by placing the church beyond three pairs of opposites.

She can be first described as living and moving and having her being in the *third dimension*.

Karl Barth, in a polemic article following the Amsterdam Assembly, pointedly stressed that the mere contrasts between good and evil, freedom and necessity, love and self-centeredness, spirit and matter, person and mechanism; in short, the contrasts between God and man, even though they represent the tension between two opposite dimensions, may easily pass by that *third one* which is presented by the Bible, by the history of redemption, and within it the history of the church. To this third dimension belong the Word of God, the Holy Spirit, God's free choice, the Creation, the Kingdom, the Sanctification, the Congregation, "and all these not as principles to be interpreted in the same sense as the first two dimensions but as the indication of *events*, of concrete once-for-all, unique *divine actions*, of the majestic mysteries of God that cannot be resolved into any pragmatism."

Moving along the same line of thought we dare to state that the Church can be understood only from the perspective of this third dimension, in so far as it is in and through her life that God's redemptive actions are continuously carried out; that evil is constantly overcome with good; and that the meaninglessness of human history caused by sin, suffering, turmoils, wars, and catastrophes, is again and again dispelled and replaced by a new meaning, the dynamic center of which is Christ, the Head of the Church.

A second description of the Church's unique nature in her relation to the world is well indicated by an expression used by the church fathers and mentioned also at the Evanston Assembly. The Church, according



to this definition, is the *third race* (*tertium genus*). She was called by that name because her members were chosen both from the Jews and the Greeks (cf. I. Cor. 10:32-33), and yet they all became one in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:28). Today we denote by the same term the supra-racial character of the church. All those, belonging to her, "were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." They are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, recruited from all the nations of the whole inhabited earth, in order that they may declare the wonderful deeds of him who has called them out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Having thus found the meaning of their life in that *third dimension*, and being constantly recruited by the world and the Holy Spirit into that supra-racial or spiritual race, called the *third race*, the members of the church, in their relation to the world, can thirdly be characterized as seekers of that *third way* which time and again cuts across easily accepted dichotomies and deadlocks, avoids the identification of the gospel with any human ideology, philosophical, social, or political systems of thought, and daringly keeps on moving beyond them in ultimate loyalty to him who called himself not only the Truth and the Life, but also the Way. When making the first preparatory steps in this country for the Evanston Assembly, in 1953, it was Dr. Visser't Hooft, the General Secretary of the World Council of churches, who rightly denoted the nature of the Church and the life of the whole ecumenical movement by that dramatic expression: the third way.

#### *Both — And*

Being thus three times "the third . . ." ("the third dimension," "the third race," and "the third way"), it necessarily follows that it is not only a duty but decidedly a liberating and power-releasing inevitability for the Church to be both *against* the world and *for* the world, *both a beachhead and a bridge*. It is the love of Christ that controls the members of the Church and constantly constrains them to tell the world the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. But it also enjoins them to speak it in the spirit of self-giving love.

The beachhead Church bears witness to the exclusiveness of Christian truth; the bridge Church to the inclusiveness of Christian love.

In the eyes of the beachhead Church there is no such thing as appeasement or peace at any price; she is the Church Militant, her mission is that of the prophetic critic, and her ministry a ministry of holy maladjustment. The bridge Church does everything in the spirit of costly self-identification with the children of the world, endeavors to expand the boundaries of the fellowship of faith, hope, and love, and fulfills her communal mission by practicing the ministry of reconciliation.

The beachhead Church demands repentance and obedience to God, testifies to the "Divine Imperative," and conveys the message of righteousness by ceaselessly rebuking and challenging the conscience of society, as she is well aware that "if there is no tension between the Church and society, then either the society is regenerate, or the Church is conformed." The bridge Church offers to the same people God's forgiveness, testifies to his "Grand Indicative," and while endeavoring to carry in Christ all the burdens of the whole inhabited earth, consoles the conscience of society and evokes in it the peace of God which passes all understanding.

The beachhead Church is a "mighty army," "wholly geared to conquest," ever ready to encounter the world with tokens of His judgement and thus to uproot men's wicked cocksureness, false hopes, and self-righteousness. The bridge Church is the fellowship of forgiven and forgiving sinners, always seeking to recapture the world with tokens of His mercy; ready to heal the sick, to find the lost, and to dissolve men's insecurity feelings and their state of hopelessness.

The beachhead Church is the unwelcome Church, the *ecclesia non grata*, the society of outspoken men and the fortress of those who are hated, rejected, and put to death for Christ's sake. The bridge Church is the fellowship of those who rejoice in having become partakers in his suffering; she is the society of silently forebearing men, a flock of sheep who do not open their mouth and remain dumb before their shearers because they know that there is not only a time to speak but also a time to keep silence.

The beachhead Church is the Church that rebels and unavoidably brings upon herself the old indictment, "These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also." The bridge Church is the Church of outgoing love and her members even today can be described most fittingly by the words of an unknown apostolic father: "What the soul is to the body, Christians are to the whole world . . . (For as) the soul is shut up in the body, but itself holds the body together, (so) Christians are kept in the world as a prison, but themselves hold the world together."

#### *The Very Same Church*

Having drawn all these parallel statements, we must now hasten to reassert that the beachhead Church and the bridge Church are not at all two different, separate churches, but unchangeably and consistently *the very same Church*. Just as the confessional books of the Reformation period spoke of the Church Militant and the Church Triumphant, or of the Church that is visible and the Church that is invisible, but did not fail to mention that they were always talking of the very same Church; in the same manner we also must never forget that the dialectical togetherness of beachhead and bridge indicates but two different aspects of the same reality, two interlocking, dynamic elements within the same missionary movement.

# Christianity and Crisis

A Bi-Weekly Journal of Christian Opinion  
537 West 121st St., New York 27, N. Y.

## EDITORIAL BOARD

REINHOLD NIEBUHR and JOHN C. BENNETT  
Co-Chairmen

M. SEARLE BATES	WILLIAM SCARLETT
ROBERT MCAFEE BROWN	HENRY P. VAN DUSEN
F. ERNEST JOHNSON	AMOS N. WILDER

WAYNE H. COWAN, Secretary

## CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

JAMES C. BAKER	HENRY SMITH LEIPER
CHARLES W. GILKEY	JOHN A. MACKAY
LYNN HAROLD HOUGH	FRANCIS P. MILLER
UMPHREY LEE	EDWARD L. PARSONS

The Church of Christ remains true to her head as well as to herself only insofar as she discharges loyally the tasks pertaining both to her prophetic and to her communal mission. A Church that would fail in fulfilling her role as a beachhead would increasingly become "indistinguishable" from the world. In the words of D. T. Niles, of Ceylon, such a Church would have no rough edges but would blend smoothly with her environment and shade off easily into its background. Again a Church that would fall short of her bridgebuilding mission would become increasingly "isolated" in the sense that where Christians and non-Christians meet in the normal business of life her Christian witness would not be rendered and thus the evangelistic encounter between the Church and the world could not take place at all (cf. D. T. Niles's Report on Evangelism to the plenary session of the Evanston Assembly).

Detroit Public Library  
Book Receiving Dept.  
5201 Woodward Ave.  
Detroit 2, Mich.

27462 11-55

## Arrested Conversation?

To avoid these twin-dangers and to overcome these twin-temptations: that is the great task of the Church today in our divided world. The ecumenical conversation begun at Amsterdam, and continued even more specifically at the Evanston Assembly between Christians from both sides of the world, should therefore not be allowed to fade into an arrested conversation. And it is, indeed, high time that we should start with a preliminary survey of the problems and tasks pertaining to the beachhead-and-bridge Church as she is constrained by the love of Christ to encounter the world on both sides of the Iron Curtain.

Such a survey, especially if it could evoke an ecumenical dialogue in which Christians from the Communist and the non-Communist countries would be willing to participate, could in the long run render a positive contribution not only to the life of the Church, but also to the cause of a peaceful and responsible coexistence which leads to a growing cooperation and reconciliation. It would, I am sure, make the churches both of the East and of the West more alert to resist the temptation to become spiritual satellites of any political power-block, co-drifters with the ongoing secular revolutions or co-idlers in the complacent company of reform-abhorring worshippers of the status-quo.

## Christ is the Link

Last but not least, it would help the same churches to make it manifest through their witnessing lives that it is not some sentimental, unprincipled tie that binds them together. That they are not merely a passive worshipping community whose members find their satisfaction in reading responsively across iron-, bamboo-, as well as ecclesiastical velvet-curtains certain unpractical beatitudes of an antiquated man called Jesus. But that they believe Christ, the crucified and risen Lord himself, to be the only link that alone could bring forth and undergird not only a peaceful and responsible coexistence but the ultimate reconciliation of all the nations.

Christ is the link. And in and through him stranger, neighbor, enemy, become brothers for whom he died. And as Christ is redemptively present on both sides of the world, so can the brother for whom he died be found everywhere throughout the whole inhabited earth.

Christ can not be abrogated either by a "Westernized" or by a "Sovietized" Christian self-righteousness. Nor can the brother for whom he died be relegated from this or from the other side of the world. He can, however, be "gained" by a Church that is willing to walk loyally in Christ's footsteps and thus to discharge steadfastly her twofold mission as beachhead and as bridge.